

B. AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

1. Please replace paragraphs [0014], [0015], and [0017]-[0021] currently of record with the following replacement paragraphs [0014], [0015], and [0017]-[0021] (marked to show changes made):

[0014] An apparatus for tensioning a ~~shaft-mounted~~ helical spring mounted generally concentrically on an elongate round shaft having a shaft diameter, said spring having a first end fixed to a building support and a second end anchored to a spring cone lockably mounted on the shaft, said apparatus comprising:

[0015] (a) a ratchet wheel assembly ~~comprising~~, comprising:

[0017] a.2 a pair of primary ratchet wheels, each having a centroidal opening with a semi-circular portion concentric with the primary ratchet wheel, plus a radial slot contiguous with the centroidal opening and having two slot edges; said radial slot extending radially therefrom from the centroidal opening to the wheel's perimeter and defining intersecting therewith so as to define a gap in said perimeter, extending between said edges of the radial slot, said perimeter gap having edges defined by the intersections of the slot edges with the perimeter of the ratchet wheel; the diameter of the semi-circular portion of the centroidal opening and the ~~minimum~~ width of the radial slot each being greater than the shaft ~~diameter,~~ diameter; said perimeter defining a continuous plurality of uniformly-spaced cogs between the edges of the perimeter ~~gap,~~ gap; and said primary ratchet wheels being spaced apart and coaxially mounted to the trunnion with their radial slots aligned with the open side of the trunnion such that the ratchet wheel assembly may be positioned substantially coaxially over the shaft;

[0018] (b) a pair of bridging members, each bridging member being associated with a corresponding one of the primary ratchet wheels; each bridging member defining an arcuate-edged section ~~substantially matching the diameter of the primary ratchet wheel, said arcuate edged section~~ defining a plurality of cogs configured and spaced to match the cogs of the corresponding primary ratchet ~~wheel over an arcuate length at least equal to the arcuate length of the perimeter gap of the corresponding primary ratchet~~ wheel; and each bridging member being selectively operable between:

[0019] b.1 an engaged position, in which the arcuate-edged section bridges the perimeter gap of the bridging member's corresponding primary ratchet wheel such that the cogs of the bridging member and the corresponding primary ratchet wheel combine to form a continuous and uniformly-spaced series of cogs; and

[0020] b.2 an open position, in which the arcuate-edged section is substantially clear of the perimeter gap and radial slot of the corresponding primary ratchet wheel so as to permit positioning of the ratchet wheel assembly coaxially over the shaft;

[0021] (c) locking means, for releasably locking the bridging ~~member~~ members in the ~~open~~ engaged position;

2. Please add the following new paragraphs [0037a], [0037b], [0037c], [0037d], [0037e], and [0037f] immediately after paragraph [0037]:

[0037a] FIGURE 7 is a side view of a primary ratchet wheel and bridging member in accordance with a first alternative embodiment of the invention.

[0037b] FIGURE 8 is an end view of the primary ratchet wheel and bridging member shown in Fig. 7.

[0037c] FIGURE 9 is a side view of a primary ratchet wheel and bridging member in accordance with a second alternative embodiment of the invention.

[0037d] FIGURE 10 is an end view of the primary ratchet wheel and bridging member shown in Fig. 9.

[0037e] FIGURE 11 is a side view of a primary ratchet wheel and bridging member in accordance with a third alternative embodiment of the invention.

[0037f] FIGURE 12 is an end view of the primary ratchet wheel and bridging member shown in Fig. 11.

3. Please delete paragraph [0044] currently of record, and add new paragraphs [0044a], [0044b], [0044c], and [0044d] in its place, as follows:

[0044a] In alternative embodiments, the bridging member may be a comparatively small member with a cogged, arcuate-edged section just large enough to span the perimeter gap of the corresponding primary ratchet wheel 30. In a first alternative embodiment, shown in Figures 7 and 8, bridging member 140, with cogs 132, is attached to modified corresponding primary ratchet wheel 130 by means of hinge 142 adjacent one edge of the radial slot 34B, such that it can swing between the engaged position (in which it will lie adjacent to the primary ratchet wheel 130) and the open position).

[0044b] In a second alternative embodiment, shown in Figures 9 and 10, the bridging member 240, with cogs 242, is attached to modified corresponding primary ratchet wheel 230 by means of hinge 242 adjacent one edge of the radial slot 34B, such that it will lie in substantially coplanar relation with primary ratchet wheel 230 when in the engaged position, as indicated by the solid lines in Figure 10 (in which dotted lines also illustrate bridging member 240 in the open position).

[0044c] In a third alternative embodiment, shown in Figures 11 and 12, the bridging member 340, with cogs 342, is swivellingly mounted to modified corresponding primary ratchet wheel 330 so that it swivels between the open and engaged positions about an axis parallel to the axis of the primary ratchet wheel 330 (for example, about a pivot pin 350 as illustrated). In this third embodiment, bridging member 340 may be secured in the engaged position by means analogous to the securing means previously described for the embodiment illustrated in Figure 1-A; i.e., by providing holes 336 and 346 in primary ratchet wheel 330 and bridging member 340 respectively, through which a suitable bolt or pin may be inserted so as to releasably lock bridging member 340 in the engaged position.

[0044d] In a yet further embodiment, the bridging member could take the form of a segment of an auxiliary ratchet wheel 40 as illustrated in Figures 3 and 4, with an arcuate slot 46 having a pair of stop posts extending therethrough, so as to allow the bridging member to rotate concentrically relative to its corresponding primary ratchet wheel 30.